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STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LANSING



REBECCA A. HUMPHRIES
DIRECTOR

February 9, 2009

The Honorable Michelle McManus, Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Natural Resources
S-2 Capitol Building
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

The Honorable Michael Lahti, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Natural Resources
House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7514

Dear Senator McManus and Representative Lahti:

Pursuant to Section 52506, PA 451 of 1994, attached is the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Fiscal Year 2007-08 report addressing forestry issues.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sharon M. Schafer, Chief
Budget and Support Services
517-335-3276

Attachment

cc: Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Members
House Appropriations Subcommittee Members
Ms. Jessica Runnels, Senate Fiscal Agency
Dr. Kirk Lindquist, House Fiscal Agency
Mr. Robert Emerson, State Budget Director, Department of
Management and Budget (DMB)
Mr. Jacques McNeely, DMB
Ms. Jennifer Harrison, DMB
Director Rebecca Humphries, DNR
Ms. Arminda Koch, Resource Management Deputy, DNR
Mr. Rodney Stokes, Chief of Staff, DNR
Mr. Daniel Eichinger, Legislative Liaison, DNR
Ms. Lynne Boyd, DNR
Mr. Jason Crandall, DNR

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**Michigan Department of Natural Resources
1994 Public Act 451, Section 52506, Report
Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-08**

The Department of Natural Resources (Department) is required to provide a report to the Natural Resources Commission and the Legislature that details the following:

(a) The number of harvestable acres in the state forest as determined by the certification program under section 52506.

Forest Certification systems do not determine the number of harvestable acres. Systems evaluate whether harvesting is being conducted in accordance with sustainable forestry principles that consider a broad range of environmental, social, and economic criteria.

(b) The number of acres of the state forest that were harvested and the number of cords of wood that were harvested from the state forest.

There were 49,352 acres of state forest harvested by the timber industry in FY 2007-08 that yielded an estimated volume of 746,732 cords. Approximately 54,700 acres were offered for timber sale auction by the Department, yielding an estimated volume exceeding 862,000 cords.

(c) The number of acres of state-owned lands owned or controlled by the Department, other than state forest lands that were harvested, and the number of cords of wood that were harvested from those lands.

The number of acres owned or controlled by the Department, other than state forest lands that were harvested for timber in FY 2007-08 was 833. The number of cords harvested was 13,263.

(d) Efforts by the Department to promote recreational opportunities in the state forest.

Publicity for the state forest campground program was provided via outdoor shows, the Michigan State Fair and the Upper Peninsula State Fair, various Department publications, and the Department website.

The Department printed 100,000 off-road vehicle guides and 50,000 snowmobile brochures.

The Department secured a grant to update and reprint a public information brochure on state forest pathways and campgrounds in 2009.

The Department secured a grant to develop a GPS data collection process in 2009 to update public information maps of the 880 miles state forest pathways.

The Department completed GPS data collection of the state ORV and snowmobile recreation trails in 2008, and posted updated maps on the Department website in a format that allows public printing and use of the maps.

(e) Information on the public's utilization of the recreational opportunities offered by the state forest.

The Department website and web pages were reformatted to improve ease of use and access to recreation information, the campground search engine, and the campground reservation system.

There were 36,283 camp registrations for state forest campsites in 2008, for a total of 117,445 registered campers. This equates to a total of 248,337 camper days (number of campers multiplied by the number of camp days stayed at a campsite) for the year.

There were 199,628 snowmobile trail permits sold during the season (9/01/07 through 5/31/08) and 186,891 ORV licenses sold in license year 2008.

Approximately 100 use permits were issued for a variety of recreational special events such as dog sled, ski, mountain bike and snowshoe races, dog trials and skeet shooting, on state forest lands.

(f) Efforts by the Department to promote wildlife habitat in the state forest.

Under a co-management agreement, Wildlife Division works jointly with Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division in the compartment review process to ensure wildlife habitat management goals are reflected in the stand level treatments that are approved. In FY 2007-08, Wildlife Division participated in reviewing 594,655 acres of state forest to determine wildlife management needs. Beyond vegetative management reviews, this acreage includes consideration for habitat improvement and habitat planning on sites with exemplary natural features, endangered/threatened species, or natural areas contained within state forests.

Strategic planning efforts for state forest lands are being updated. These planning efforts were focused on the forest certification process and draft revisions of the State Forest Management Plan. Efforts directed towards ensuring wildlife restoration along with associated recreation of hunting and trapping were adequately reflected in these plans.

(g) Status of the plan and whether the Department recommends any changes in the plan.

Following public review and comment, the Department's "2008 State Forest Management Plan" (SFMP) was approved by the Director on April 10, 2008. Staff also worked on reframing the eco-region planning platform that complements the SFMP.

The eco-region level is being revamped to a regional state forest plan covering state forest lands and an eco-region plan across all ownerships. The regional state forest plans will include management areas that provide more specific direction to local resource managers. There are no recommended changes to the SRMP at this time.

(h) Status of certification efforts required in section 52505 and, beginning in 2006, a definitive statement of whether the Department is maintaining certification of the entire state forest.

The state forest system was awarded forest certification in December 2005 under the auspices of Sustainable Forestry Initiative[®] (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Subsequently, combined SFI and FSC annual certification audits have been conducted every October in 2006, 2007, and 2008. These audits have verified that the Department is in compliance with SFI and FSC standards.

The Department is monitoring and continually improving sustainable state forest land management. The Department is maintaining Sustainable Forestry Initiative[®] (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest certification of the state forest system excluding minor acreages that are not under the exclusive, direct control of the Department, e.g. the Grayling Military Reserve and forest lands leased to Luce County (original 15-year lease in 1984 and one-time renewal in 1999).

(i) A description of any activities that have been undertaken on forest pilot project areas described in section 52511.

Four forest pilot project areas were established in 2006, as required by section 52511. The Department has established a team which is developing the necessary contracts, implement bids, will provide guidance, and conduct the project evaluation.